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Cover: Young Greater Black-backed Gull at Smith Island, June 21, 1975.
Photo by Henry T. Armistead.



MARYLAND BIRDLIFE

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BREEDING OF GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL, HERRING GULL, AND GADWALL AT SMITH ISLAND, MARYLAND

Henry T. Armistead

GREATER BLACK-BACKED GULL (*Larus marinus*)

On the evening of June 20, 1975, the author visited the huge Herring Gull colony a few hundred yards east of Ewell, Smith Island, and discovered two very large but flightless juvenile Greater Black-backed Gulls and two nests with one and three eggs respectively. The young birds were so big that they impressed the writer as being as large or larger than adult Herring Gulls. With their tailless appearance, long necks and bills, and scurrying movements as they ran about, they bore a surprising



Fig. 1. Nest and eggs of Greater Black-backed Gull, June 21, 1975, Smith Island (with quarter for comparison).

resemblance to bustards! Measurements of one egg from each nest were obtained and after recording the nest contents of some Herring Gull nests nearby (see Table 2) the area was vacated. A return visit, with camera in hand, was made on the evening of June 21, when at least four additional young Greater Black-backed Gulls were found. It is possible that as many as a dozen other pairs of Greater Black-backed Gulls were present at these two Smith Island colonies, and they may also have had nests.

Photographs were taken of one of the largest young (see cover photo) and of the nest with three eggs (see Fig. 1 with quarter and Swiss army knife for comparison). The measurement of the single egg in the other nest was 88.5 X 50.0 mm., far longer than any Herring Gull egg measurement given in Bent (1963). In fact, this very elongate egg exceeded in length any of the measurements for Greater Black-backed Gull eggs listed in this same source. It was somewhat narrower than eggs of this species usually are. The three eggs in the other nest were of a more typical size, the upper left one in the photograph measuring 78.0 X 50.0 mm. The young bird was a difficult subject to photograph, usually running away. After pursuit it would freeze at a certain distance allowing photographs such as the one shown, which were close but not as close as was desired. Closer approach would result either in the bird lunging at the photographer or running away again.

Table 1. Breeding Records of Greater Black-backed Gull South of New Jersey

1. June 1970, Fisherman Island, Va., 2 nests with eggs producing four young, R. E. Gilmore, first Va. breeding (Scott and Cutler, 1970).
2. June 25, 1972, Oregon Inlet, N.C., 4 large flightless young, Robert F. Soots, first N.C. breeding (Parnell and Soots, 1975).
3. June 27, 1972, island south of Ocean City, Md., 1 large young, Willet T. Van Velzen, first Md. breeding (Boone, 1975).
4. June 1, 1973, Oregon Inlet, 1 nest with 3 eggs plus one other probable breeding pair, James F. Parnell and Robert F. Soots (Teulings, 1973 and Parnell and Soots, 1975).
5. May 24, 1975, Robins Marsh near South Point, Md., 1 nest with 2 eggs, Bill Akers and T. F. Wieboldt (some ten pairs present) (Scott and Cutler, 1975).
6. June 20-21, 1975, Smith Island, Md., 2 nests with 1 and 3 eggs, 6 large young, 12+ pairs in area, Henry T. Armistead.

As may be seen from Table 1 this species has been expanding its breeding range south of New Jersey in a rather dramatic fashion. The present breeding records fit well into this context but are also interesting in the light of the distance from the ocean at which they took place. Although many despair as these predatory gulls expand their breeding range, less than a mile from the Smith Island gullery is a colony of close to two hundred pairs of Common Terns on West Troy Island which seemed to be thriving on June 21, 1975. Perhaps the Greater Black-backed Gulls are more closely tied to predation on Herring Gull eggs and young. All of their southern breeding records have been in

colonies of Herring Gulls. In winter the writer has seen this species carrying in its bill while in flight the intact corpse of a Horned Grebe near Smith Island, Va., on December 28, 1975. Another bird was observed to kill an apparently healthy American Coot at Back Bay refuge, Va., on December 29, 1974.

HERRING GULL (*Larus argentatus*)

The Ewell area was visited earlier on June 2, 1973, when at least half a dozen adult Greater Black-backed Gulls were observed carefully in the midst of the teeming Herring Gull colony. Their breeding was suspected at this time (Armistead, 1974). Considerable effort was made then to determine if the black-backs were breeding. Although no nests or young were found, it nevertheless seems quite likely that they may have nested on Smith Island several years prior to 1975. In 1973 nest contents of 543 Herring Gull nests were recorded in the huge Easter Point gull colony, but the site of the 1975 black-back's breeding, which is across the channel (Tyler Ditch) to Tylerton and near Ewell, was not visited. Nest contents of 259 Herring Gull nests were recorded from these two colonies in 1975, 85 in the west (Ewell) colony and 174 in the east (Easter Point) colony. For some reason unknown to the writer nesting was much further advanced in the west colony with many more young birds present here than on the other side of the Tyler Ditch, only a few hundred yards away (see Table 2).

Table 2. Herring Gull Nest Contents, Smith Island, Md.

June 2, 1973

Nest contents:	<u>1e</u>	<u>2e</u>	<u>3e</u>	<u>1y</u>	<u>2y</u>	<u>3y</u>	<u>1ely</u>	<u>1e2y</u>	<u>2ely</u>	Total
East colony	77	121	294	5	9	8	4	15	10	543

June 20, 1975

Nest contents:	<u>1e</u>	<u>2e</u>	<u>3e</u>	<u>1y</u>	<u>2y</u>	<u>3y</u>	<u>1ely</u>	<u>1e2y</u>	<u>2ely</u>	Total
West colony	17	11	12	12	15	6	3	8	1	85
East colony	30	61	54	4	8	5	5	7	-	174
Total	47	72	66	16	23	11	8	15	1	259

The total number of pairs of Herring Gulls nesting here should be of some interest since this is the biggest colony (by far) south of New York. One photograph of approximately one third of the birds in flight over the west colony, which was the smaller colony, contains over 400 birds. Using this as a basis it was estimated that over 1,200 birds were in flight over this colony with perhaps as many as 1,600 at the bigger colony. Additionally there must have been hundreds of other birds not in the air either resting on the water or feeding elsewhere not in the immediate vicinity of the colonies. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has estimated that up to 2,000 pairs of Herring Gulls nest on Smith Island.

GADWALL (*Anas strepera*)

Less than one mile from the gulls is Swan Island, part of the Glen L. Martin National Wildlife Refuge, which lies on the north side of the inlet to Ewell and on the west side of Smith Island. On June 20, 1975, while investigating a flock of seventy-six Black Skimmers here the writer found breeding Gadwalls, consisting of one female with four small downy young and another female with fourteen small downy young. The latter group perhaps was composed of young from more than one brood, although the fourteen were all following one female. In addition to these two adult females, six other adult Gadwalls were seen the same day. In 1973 during five active days of field work here no Gadwalls were encountered. It was a further surprise to see these ducks in a rather maritime setting scrambling off of a sandy beach adjacent to a rock jetty and swimming straight out into Chesapeake Bay. This seems to be the first breeding record for Gadwall on the Chesapeake Bay islands. However, they have been found breeding nearby on small islands very close to the mainland of Deal Island. They are common breeders elsewhere in the Deal Island area and have also been known to breed at Elliott Island, Md., and have been observed during the summer at Saxis Island, Va.

The absence of certain predators from these offshore islands, notably the racoon and red fox, may help to foster the continued breeding of these ducks. However, several persons told the writer it was believed locally that the owner of the area where the gulls nest did not like the presence of the colony and had introduced foxes to try to break it up. If this was true it did not seem to have disrupted the gulls very much, if at all, and no signs of any disturbance were noticed.

The writer extends his gratitude to Frederic R. Scott, of Richmond, Va., and Danny Bystrak, of the Migratory Bird and Habitat Research Laboratory, Laurel, Md., who brought to his attention the two prior Maryland breeding records of Greater Black-backed Gull at a time when they were both unknown to him as well as not yet referred to in the literature.

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BIRDING IN DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE

Peggy Bohanan

Many people are aware that birding in large cities can be very exciting. It has been well documented that New York's Central Park has had such exotic birds as Purple Gallinules. City parks, however, have large areas of undeveloped land with a variety of habitats.

This is a report of birding in a single block in downtown Baltimore, where 104 species have been recorded since 1962. The 900 block of Tyson St. has small gardens and trees that act as an oasis, surrounded by cement, for the migrating birds.

A busy flyway supplies the bird traffic, for in summer and winter there are few species present. The common summer birds are American Robin, Northern Cardinal, Northern Mockingbird, Mourning Dove, Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift and of course European Starlings and House Sparrows. One year Common Yellowthroats nested and in 1975 House Finches did also.

In winter only mockingbirds and cardinals are regular. Last year House Finches wintered. Juncos, White-throats, Hermit Thrushes and Blue Jays come and go; and overhead, gulls fly back and forth from Druid Hill Reservoir to the harbor.

In spring and fall migration, however, it is a different situation entirely. Wonderful things appear. The greatest number of species in one day is 28, but the number of birds is sometimes overwhelming for a confined space. Non-birding neighbors comment on the sound and activity each time they open a door on days, like a recent October 1, when 150 birds of 14 kinds, seemed to clutter up the yards.

The warblers that show up most frequently are Black-and-white, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Chestnut-sided, Ovenbird, Common Yellowthroat, Wilson's, Canada and American Redstart. The Ovenbirds walk around in the open and lose their secretive habits. A Worm-eating Warbler stayed on a feeding shelf at the kitchen window long enough to have its picture taken.

The most regular sparrows are towhee, junco, Chipping, Field, White-throat, Swamp and Song. Fox Sparrows have been recorded 6 times and the most unusual bird on the list is the Henslow's Sparrow, which stayed all day on April 22, 1974.

Other unexpected birds that caused great furor on their first visits and then returned several times are Marsh Wren and American Woodcock. In early fall 1967 a Peregrine Falcon sat on an antenna on a nearby roof for about 15 minutes while it was carefully inspected through a 30 power telescope. This list was started when my husband and I were neophyte birders, but every effort has been made to be sure of identifications before adding a new species.

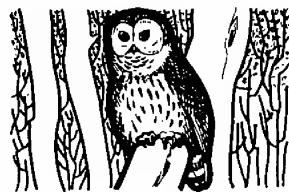
Table 1. Birds Recorded in the 900 Block of Tyson Street

C = Common U = Uncommon R = Seen only once or twice

Whistling Swan, U	White-br. Nuthatch, R	Pine Warbler, R
Canada Goose, C	Brown Creeper, C	Ovenbird, C
Turkey Vulture, U	House Wren, C	Northern Waterthrush, U
Northern Goshawk, R	Winter Wren, C	Common Yellowthroat, C
Sharp-shinned Hawk, R	Carolina Wren, U	Yellow-breasted Chat, R
Red-tailed Hawk, U	Marsh Wren, U	Hooded Warbler, U
Broad-winged Hawk, U	No. Mockingbird, C	Wilson's Warbler, C
Osprey, R	Gray Catbird, C	Canada Warbler, C
Peregrine Falcon, R	Brown Thrasher, C	American Redstart, C
American Kestrel, C	American Robin, C	House Sparrow, C
American Woodcock, U	Wood Thrush, C	Eastern Meadowlark, R
Herring Gull, C	Hermit Thrush, C	Red-winged Blackbird, R
Ring-billed Gull, C	Swainson's Thrush, C	Northern Oriole, C
Mourning Dove, C	Gray-cheeked Thrush, U	Common Grackle, C
Yellow-bill. Cuckoo, R	Veery, U	Brown-headed Cowbird, R
Common Nighthawk, C	Blue-gr. Gnatcatch., U	Scarlet Tanager, C
Chimney Swift, C	Golden-cr. Kinglet, C	Summer Tanager, R
Ruby-thr. Hummingbd, U	Ruby-cr. Kinglet, C	Northern Cardinal, C
Common Flicker, C	European Starling, C	Rose-breasted Grosbeak, U
Yellow-bel. Sapskr., C	Solitary Vireo, R	Indigo Bunting, R
Hairy Woodpecker, R	Red-eyed Vireo, C	Purple Finch, R
Downy Woodpecker, U	Philadelphia Vireo, R	House Finch, C
Eastern Kingbird, U	Blk-&-white Warbler, C	American Goldfinch, R
Gt. Crested Fly., R	Worm-eating Warbler, R	Rufous-sided Towhee, C
Eastern Phoebe, C	Tennessee Warbler, R	Savannah Sparrow, R
Yellow-bellied Fly., R	No. Parula Warbler, C	Grasshopper Sparrow, R
Least Flycatcher, R	Yellow Warbler, C	Henslow's Sparrow, R
Eastern Pewee, C	Magnolia Warbler, C	Northern Junco, C
Barn Swallow, U	Blk-thr. Blue Warb., C	American Tree Sparrow, R
Purple Martin, R	Yellow-rumped Warb., U	Chipping Sparrow, C
Blue Jay, C	Blk-thr Green Warb., R	Field Sparrow, C
American Crow, C	Blackburnian Warb., U	White-throated Sparrow, C
Fish Crow, U	Chestnut-side Warb., C	Fox Sparrow, U
Carolina Chickadee, R	Bay-breasted Warb., R	Swamp Sparrow, C
Tufted Titmouse, U	Blackpoll Warbler, R	Song Sparrow, C

There are only three birds that I now feel any question about, Savannah and American Tree Sparrows and Northern Goshawk. The sparrows only because they have never reappeared, the hawk because it seems so unlikely; but then so does a Henslow's Sparrow.

Only those species that have been seen are included here. There are undoubtedly other birds, identifiable by voice, that could be detected flying over. A number of common species are not yet recorded; for example, Prairie Warbler, White-eyed Vireo and several of the Empidonax flycatchers. Will one of these be number 105?



THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

In recent years, all that we cherish as our national background has been attacked by powerful groups who are bent on destroying the principles that made us a great nation. Crime has increased; violence is an everyday occurrence; the idea of getting something for nothing is encouraged by an ever increasing number of states resorting to lotteries; our courts have become very lenient. Because of such events, many citizens feel that America is going the way of Rome. At such a time it is inspiring to belong to an organization like MOS whose goals are to save some of our national heritage, and whose members give of their time and money toward achieving these goals. I have just forwarded to our Treasurer information from one of our members announcing that she is giving \$1,000 to MOS to be used toward the Carey Run mortgage.

I mentioned in the September issue of *Birdlife* the extensive effort of the Education Committee and said that their progress would be summarized in this issue. Here is the summary.

1. At a joint meeting of Chapter program chairmen and the Education Committee on March 15, 1975, a need for better communication among Chapters was identified. The Education Committee asked for copies of each Chapter's program, for distribution to each of the other Chapters.

2. The Committee developed a questionnaire to assist in its long-range planning and sent a copy to each Chapter; 78% of the Chapters have responded.

3. The Committee is preparing an Educational Resource Guide to assist Chapter program chairmen in their planning.

4. Two new types of trips are being planned for 1976: a Breeding Bird Foray in Somerset County on the Memorial Day weekend, based at Irish Grove Sanctuary; and a Lister's Trip on the Delmarva Peninsula on Veterans Day weekend.

Dr. Poscover and his Committee are doing a very commendable job. The detailed report of their work will be made available to all members.

We would like more members to contribute to *Birdlife*. Articles do not have to be lengthy. Observations such as those reported in the September issue, "Another Kingbird - Another Century" by Nancy D. Rowe, and "Eastern Kingbirds Catching Whirligig Beetles" by Hervey Brackbill add greatly to the publication.

There is an interesting paragraph in the latest issue of *Audubon Leader* that illustrates our changing attitude toward conserving energy:

"Education Note. There was a time when a college course on 'wind-milling' might have sounded like a way to keep dumb football players safe from the dean, but New Mexico State University is quite serious about it. The new course is being offered to meet a growing demand from energy-conscious ranchers, farmers and suburbanites for instruction in the repair, installation and maintenance of water-pumping windmills."

Barclay E. Tucker, President



TWO MORE YELLOW-HEADED BLACKBIRDS BANDED NEAR LAUREL, MARYLAND

Brooke Meanley

An immature Yellow-headed Blackbird (*Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus*) that I trapped and banded at the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on November 16, 1975, was the second one of these birds captured at this station in the eighteen years that I have been banding here. A third individual, an immature female with an incompletely ossified skull, was trapped here seventeen days later, on December 3, 1975, by Robert T. Mitchell, and banded and photographed by Danny Bystrak (see photos). The first Yellow-head captured here was an immature male banded on October 13, 1967.

This western species breeds mainly from the Great Plains westward to the valleys of California, and most of the population winters in southern Mexico.

The sighting of at least two other individuals this winter on the Eastern Shore of Maryland suggests that there may have been a greater influx of Yellow-heads into our State than in any previous season.



Female Yellow-headed Blackbird, Patuxent Research Center, Dec. 3, 1975

Since there are only ten records for Maryland prior to this fall and winter, I am summarizing all known Maryland occurrences below.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Age and Sex</u>	<u>Locality</u>	<u>Observer</u>	<u>Reference</u>
Sept. 10, 1891	male specimen	Curtis Bay		Kirkwood, 1895
Sept. 18, 1893	fem. spec.	Patapsco marsh		Kirkwood, 1895
Oct. 1, 1894	fem. spec.	Patapsco marsh		Kirkwood, 1895
May 11-13, 1956	male	Ocean City C. Buchanan	Md. Birdlife 12:39-40	
date unknown		Lake Roland	Md. Birdlife 23:5,6	
Feb. 9, 1967	female	Oxon Hill R & R Tousey	Md. Birdlife 23: 40	
Oct. 13, 1967	im. male	Patuxent Res. Ctr. Meanley	Atl. Nat. 23:36	
April 4, 1970	male	Adelphi Brian Sharp	Md. Birdlife 26: 95	
April 1974	female	St. Michaels Alice Jones	Md. Birdlife 30:115	
May 4, 1974	m & f	Friéndsville Cynthia Vitez	Md. Birdlife 30:115	
Nov. 15, 1975	ad. male near Blackwater Refuge	C. & B. Brightbill, G. S. Beck, B. Green and H. Taylor		
Nov. 16, 1975	im. male	Patuxent Res. Ctr. B. Meanley		
Dec. 3, 1975	im. fem.	Patuxent Res. Ctr. R. T. Mitchell, D. Bystrak		
Dec. 7, 1975	ad. male near Blackwater Refuge	M. K. Klimkiewicz et al.		
Dec. 30, 1975	ad. male	Kingston (Crisfield Christmas Count) C. Vaughn		

Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, Laurel 20811



UNUSUAL BIRDS NOTED AT BROADWATER POINT, ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

K. Friel Sanders

My house, which is located on the bay side of Broadwater Point, looks out 12 miles across the Chesapeake Bay to the Eastern Shore. The front yard drops four feet or more into a marsh that edges Carr's Creek. Across the creek is a small island that was made by a cut through a spit of land running north from Deale Beach. The heavy winter storms have eroded the island badly. Clumps of marsh grass are filling the creek, which will soon be new marsh land.

My good neighbors hate to see mud flats in the creeks. However, I know that nice wide mud flats make a birder's paradise. Over the past twenty-one years, I have noted very interesting and surprising visitors in the creeks and marshes and on the mud flats. The following notations from my diaries give a sampling of what has been seen here.

MUTE SWAN (*Cygnus olor*). Four birds were in the creek in front of the house when I came home from work on May 9, 1963.

SNOW GOOSE (*Chen caerulescens*). An injured adult was in Beckwith's front yard on November 11, 1965.

SHELDUCK (*Tadorna tadorna*). Late in the afternoon of February 27, 1965, a male of this large goose-like duck swam down the creek and walked

out onto the flat, as I previously reported in *Maryland Birdlife* (21:35). This Old World species is commonly held in captivity in the United States, so my bird most likely was an escapee.

AMERICAN OYSTERCATCHER (*Haematopus palliatus*). This coastal species appeared on the sand bar across the creek on April 20, 1966. The black and white body pattern and the red bill were suggestive of a Shelduck; but after a closer inspection it proved to be a new species for my growing list of birds for Broadwater Point, and the northernmost record in Chesapeake Bay.

AMERICAN AVOCET (*Recurvirostra americana*). Between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. on May 14, 1970, Elizabeth Slater called me to come and see some white birds that were flying over the mud flats. The birds wheeled, came back and settled on the mud long enough for us to see there were six beautiful American Avocets, the first for this county. In less than ten minutes they were gone.

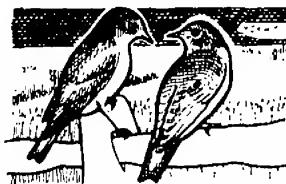
GLAUCOUS GULL (*Larus hyperboreus*). Just before dusk on March 22, 1975, I was attracted by the appearance of a white bird in the creek. A quick check with binoculars disclosed a solid white gull in company with an assortment of Herring, Ring-bills, Greater Black-backs and one Laughing Gull. Using Pearson's *Birds of America*, Peterson's *A Field Guide to the Birds* and Robbins, Bruun and Zim's *Birds of North America*, I identified the white bird as a second-year Glaucous Gull. After careful study with the telescope, I called in four neighbors to help verify my identification. When the bird returned at 8:30 the next morning, I prepared to photograph it; but it was frightened away and did not return.

BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops niger*). On May 5, 1975, while checking the gulls in the creek from my neighbor's dock, two large black and white birds flew by very close to the water. I quickly got them in focus in my binoculars and was astonished to see two Black Skimmers.

DICKCISSEL (*Spiza americana*). On November 28, 1963, a Dickcissel came to the feeder with Red-winged Blackbirds.

SEASIDE SPARROW (*Ammospiza maritima*). On April 28, 1975, when I was standing on my neighbor's dock, which runs out a hundred feet over the marsh to the water, I heard an unfamiliar song. I looked for a sparrow, expecting it to be perched on a bush. Instead, I found a ventriloquist practically under the dock where I stood. It was the first singing Seaside Sparrow I have found in my marsh, although I have previously (*Maryland Birdlife* 14:60-61) recorded their occurrence here in winter.

As I look out from my vantage point, I wonder what unusual visitor will be next.



THE SEASON

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER, 1975

Chandler S. Robbins

After a normal July, Marylanders experienced a warm, dry August, followed by a cool and very wet September. The remnants of Hurricane Eloise dropped 10 to 13 inches of rain on north central Maryland, Sept. 23-26, causing another hundred-year flood. This flood, unlike the one caused by Agnes in June 1972, occurred after most birds were safely out of their nests. Northerly and northwesterly winds that followed Eloise ushered in one of the best songbird flights of the fall on Sept. 28-29.

For a discussion of the August weather and its effects on the warbler migration, see the paragraph on Warblers.

The earliest fall arrival dates are summarized by counties in Table 1; the counties are arranged, as usual, from northwest to southeast. Underscored dates in the table designate banded birds identified in the hand, whereas underscored dates in the text denote record-breaking dates for one of the six major Sections of the State: Allegheny Mountain, Ridge and Valley, Piedmont, Upper Chesapeake, Western Shore and Eastern Shore (see map on page 19 of Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia by Stewart and Robbins, North American Fauna No. 62, 1958).

The following observers contributed the vast majority of the records used in Table 1: Garrett County--Mrs. Frances Pope, Kendrick Y. Hodgdon; Allegany--James Paulus, John Willetts, Dorothea Malec; Washington--Daniel Boone, Robert Keedy, Mrs. Alice Mallonee; Frederick--Dr. John W. Richards; Baltimore City and County--Mrs. Peggy Bohanan, Mrs. Gladys Cole, Mrs. Marion Glass, Mrs. Janet Ganter, Joseph Schreiber; Howard--Mrs. Joann Solem, Mrs. Rosamond Munro, Dr. V. Krishnamoorthy; Montgomery--Mr. and Mrs. M. B. Donnald, Paul Woodward, Nancy and Lucy MacClintock; Prince Georges--Leonard Teuber, Chandler Robbins, Chris Ludwig, Danny Bystrak, Kathleen Klimkiewicz; Anne Arundel--Hal Wierenga, Mark Hoffman, Danny Bystrak; Charles--Leonard Teuber, Dr. George Wilmot, Olive Sorzano; Calvert--John H. Fales; Kent--Mrs. Dorothy Mendinball, Mrs. Margery Plymire, Jim Gruber, Floyd Parks, Arline Delario; Caroline--Marvin W. Hewitt, Mrs. Ethel Engle, Mrs. Alicia Knotts, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Fletcher; Talbot--Jan Reese; Somerset--Mrs. Gladys Cole, Charles Vaughn, Paul, Danny and Steve Bystrak, Herbert Axell, Chandler Robbins; Wicomico & Worcester--Robert W. Warfield, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Vaughn, Samuel Dyke.

Table 1. Earliest Fall Arrival Dates, 1975

Species	Median		Garr	Alle	Wash	Fred	Balt	Howd	Mont	Pr.C.	Anne	Chas	Calv	Kent	Caro	Talb	Somr	Wi&Wo	
	10-yr	1975																	
Common Loon	--	10/ 6	10/10	0	10/18	0	9/18	10/25	10/12	0	9/16	--	0	9/ 8	0	10/ 3	--	--	
Pied-billed Grebe	--	9/22	8/ 8	9/26	9/28	--	9/20	--	9/22	9/16	9/23	--	--	10/22	--	9/13	--	--	
Double-cr. Cormorant	--	9/ 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8/20	0	10/ 8	9/ 8	0	9/ 6	9/27	8/26	
Great Egret	--	8/ 5	0	0	0	0	0	0	7/24	--	8/ 5	--	7/25	9/ 1	0	8/30	--	--	
Snowy Egret	--	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7/12	0	0	7/26	0	8/ 9	--	--	
Little Blue Heron	--	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7/30	0	0	8/18	8/ 3	0	--	--	
Canada Goose	9/26	9/26	9/25	--	9/27	--	9/27	9/26	9/26	9/15	9/12	9/28	10/ 6	8/ 8	9/ 8	9/26	9/27	9/17	
Blue-winged Teal	--	8/31	8/30	9/ 1	7/20	--	0	8/29	9/ 9	8/10	--	--	9/ 8	0	9/ 1	--	--	--	
Sharp-shinned Hawk	--	9/24	8/24	--	9/27	--	9/27	9/27	9/13	10/ 4	9/21	9/22	10/25	9/20	--	9/14	9/27	--	
Broad-winged Hawk	9/12	9/10	8/13	--	9/ 7	9/21	9/ 4	9/27	9/13	8/24	9/10	9/14	0	0	9/10	--	0	0	
American Kestrel	--	9/13	--	--	9/27	--	--	8/14	9/13	--	8/17	9/13	10/ 2	8/16	9/28	7/27	9/27	9/28	
Semipalmated Plover	--	7/28	0	8/ 6	7/20	0	0	0	0	0	7/11	0	0	9/ 8	0	0	9/27	7/13	
Black-bellied Plover	--	9/29	0	9/29	0	0	0	0	0	0	8/ 6	10/ 5	0	0	0	9/29	9/27	--	
Greater Yellowlegs	8/10	7/24	9/19	9/25	7/20	0	0	0	7/ 3	0	7/12	0	0	7/28	0	0	--	--	
Lesser Yellowlegs	8/12	7/28	0	8/15	7/28	0	0	0	8/16	0	6/28	0	0	7/28	0	0	--	7/17	
Solitary Sandpiper	8/ 5	--	0	8/15	7/20	0	0	0	7/ 5	0	7/ 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Spotted Sandpiper	7/26	--	--	--	7/20	--	--	--	--	--	7/ 1	0	0	7/30	0	0	0	7/12	
Common Snipe	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	10/ 6	9/ 2	--	10/15	0	--	0	--	9/25	
Short-billed Dowitcher	--	8/ 6	0	8/ 6	0	0	0	0	8/ 6	0	6/28	0	0	9/13	0	7/ 8	9/27	--	
Sanderling	--	--	0	8/ 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	7/11	0	0	0	0	9/20	--	6/24	
Semipalmated Sandpiper	--	8/ 2	0	8/ 2	0	0	0	0	0	0	7/10	0	0	9/ 8	0	0	9/27	6/24	
Least Sandpiper	8/30	7/20	9/19	7/26	7/20	0	0	0	7/ 5	0	6/30	0	0	7/28	0	7/15	--	--	
Pectoral Sandpiper	8/10	8/ 2	9/19	8/ 6	0	0	0	0	8/13	0	7/11	0	0	7/28	7/24	0	--	--	
Dunlin	--	--	0	8/ 6	0	0	0	0	0	0	9/24	0	0	9/ 8	0	0	--	--	
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	9/ 7	8/25	--	--	9/ 7	--	--	8/25	--	8/12	8/16	--	9/21	8/20	9/22	--	--	--	
Common Nighthawk	8/22	9/ 2	8/22	--	--	--	9/ 2	9/ 4	8/17	8/15	8/15	9/ 9	9/ 4	9/ 2	--	9/15	--	8/26	
Common Flicker	9/18	9/16	--	--	9/ 5	--	9/15	10/ 9	9/15	10/ 4	9/10	9/10	9/28	9/16	--	9/28	9/27	--	
Red-headed Woodpecker	--	9/21	--	0	--	--	0	9/13	0	8/28	9/30	0	10/ 4	0	9/21	0	--	--	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	9/25	9/29	10/21	--	10/ 5	10/18	9/14	--	9/29	9/19	9/29	--	10/12	9/28	--	9/28	9/27	--	
Eastern Phoebe	9/26	9/30	--	10/ 5	9/28	--	9/30	--	9/15	9/27	9/ 6	10/ 3	10/ 3	9/30	9/30	9/29	9/29	9/29	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	9/ 1	9/ 1	0	0	0	0	8/24	0	8/20	9/ 9	8/30	9/ 3	9/25	8/16	0	9/14	0	0	
Traill's Flycatcher	--	9/ 1	--	9/27	0	0	8/21	9/ 1	8/21	0	0	0	0	8/26	0	9/ 6	9/19	0	
Least Flycatcher	8/31	8/24	--	8/24	0	0	9/ 5	0	8/23	8/24	9/ 4	0	--	8/17	0	8/30	--	0	
Eastern Pewee	--	9/ 3	8/13	--	9/ 7	--	9/ 4	--	8/20	9/ 6	8/23	9/ 3	8/28	--	--	--	9/ 6	--	--
Tree Swallow	8/30	8/ 8	--	--	--	0	0	0	8/13	9/ 4	7/ 2	0	9/20	7/19	8/ 2	7/ 4	9/27	--	
Bank Swallow	--	7/20	0	0	7/20	0	0	0	0	--	7/ 1	0	7/25	8/12	0	7/ 4	--	0	
Cliff Swallow	--	--	0	--	0	0	--	--	9/ 4	8/ 3	0	8/23	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Blue Jay	9/20	9/27	--	--	9/27	--	9/27	9/22	9/22	9/22	9/27	10/ 3	9/29	9/ 3	--	9/28	9/27	--	
White-breasted Nuthatch	--	9/29	--	10/16	9/ 5	0	9/14	8/29	--	10/ 7	10/ 9	9/ 1	11/26	9/29	--	10/ 4	9/27	--	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	9/20	9/ 6	10/19	0	10/21	8/27	9/ 2	10/ 5	10/ 5	9/ 5	8/28	9/ 7	11/28	8/19	9/ 4	9/ 4	9/27	--	--
Brown Creeper	9/28	10/ 5	--	10/12	10/11	--	10/ 5	10/10	10/ 7	9/29	9/22	10/ 3	10/13	9/17	9/17	9/28	--	10/27	
Winter Wren	10/ 2	10/ 4	10/ 7	10/16	--	--	10/ 3	9/30	10/ 4	10/ 3	10/ 1	10/16	10/12	9/28	--	9/28	10/11	10/29	
Wood Thrush	--	9/ 6	--	--	--	--	9/ 5	--	9/ 6	9/15	9/15	9/ 1	--	--	--	--	--	--	
Swainson's Thrush	9/ 8	9/ 5	9/29	8/29	9/ 7	0	8/24	9/ 5	8/29	9/ 3	8/23	9/22	9/28	8/28	9/ 8	9/ 6	9/28	7/23	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	9/15	9/28	9/28	9/28	0	0	10/ 2	0	9/ 3	9/26	9/28	9/30	0	9/29	0	9/15	9/29	0	

Species	Median												Caro	Talb	Somr	Wi&Wo			
	10-yr	1975	Garr	Alle	Wash	Fred	Balt	Howd	Mont	Pr.G	Anne	Chas	Calv	Kent					
Veery	9/ 1	9/ 4	--	--	--	9/19	9/ 3	9/ 5	8/22	9/ 2	8/23	9/10	0	8/19	9/10	9/ 6	0	0	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	10/ 6	10/ 6	10/ 4	10/ 4	--	--	9/27	10/22	10/ 8	10/ 4	10/ 7	10/ 7	9/28	9/30	--	10/ 8	10/12	--	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	9/24	9/29	10/ 1	10/ 4	--	10/16	9/16	9/30	9/27	9/29	9/22	9/30	10/ 7	9/17	9/18	9/20	9/27	10/27	
Cedar Waxwing	9/ 2	8/23	--	--	9/ 7	--	8/29	8/13	9/27	8/17	9/22	8/ 1	8/ 8	--	7/26	9/27	--		
Loggerhead Shrike	--	9/27	0	0	0	0	0	8/23	10/ 3	9/26	0	0	9/27	9/11	9/28	0	9/28		
White-eyed Vireo	--	9/ 4	0	0	--	--	9/ 4	9/ 8	--	8/25	9/ 5	9/ 3	--	7/28	9/22	9/20	--	--	
Solitary Vireo	10/ 1	9/30	--	10/16	9/27	0	9/27	0	10/14	10/ 8	9/22	0	0	9/30	0	9/28	10/11	--	
Red-eyed Vireo	--	9/ 4	8/13	--	9/ 7	9/19	9/ 4	9/10	8/15	9/ 5	8/20	--	8/28	8/18	--	9/21	9/22	--	
Black-and-white Warbler	8/28	8/23	8/24	--	--	8/31	8/16	9/14	8/15	8/21	8/22	9/ 7	8/13	9/12	9/ 7	--	--		
Blue-winged Warbler	--	8/23	0	0	0	--	8/23	8/23	9/ 9	8/25	8/25	0	0	8/16	0	0	0	0	
Tennessee Warbler	9/10	9/ 2	8/24	8/26	9/ 7	0	10/11	9/ 5	8/25	9/ 5	8/31	9/10	0	8/21	9/11	9/31	0	0	
Nashville Warbler	9/12	9/ 4	8/24	9/28	9/ 7	8/31	9/ 4	0	9/ 4	9/ 5	8/31	9/10	0	8/24	0	8/31	0	0	
N. Parula Warbler	9/16	9/ 6	--	--	--	8/31	9/11	--	9/ 6	8/22	8/25	9/ 7	8/27	9/14	--	9/28	--	--	
Yellow Warbler	9/ 2	--	--	--	--	--	8/16	--	--	--	7/26	--	--	9/ 4	--	9/ 6	--	--	
Magnolia Warbler	9/ 4	8/29	8/24	8/26	--	8/2L	8/23	9/ 2	8/25	9/ 5	8/28	9/10	9/28	8/19	9/15	8/30	9/22	0	
Cape May Warbler	9/14	9/ 7	9/ 7	0	--	9/19	9/ 4	10/18	0	9/ 7	8/29	9/10	0	8/22	9/26	8/31	0	0	
Black-thr. Blue Warbler	9/ 7	9/ 8	--	9/13	--	0	8/21	9/ 8	8/23	8/29	8/28	9/14	9/28	8/23	9/15	9/13	0	0	
Yellow-rumped Warbler	9/30	9/20	10/ 4	10/16	--	8/24	9/18	9/20	9/28	9/17	9/12	9/13	10/ 1	9/ 1	9/15	9/28	9/27	10/ 6	
Black-thr. Green Warbler	9/12	9/ 7	8/13	9/28	9/ 7	9/19	8/28	9/ 8	8/28	8/21	9/ 2	9/ 7	9/21	9/13	0	9/14	0	0	
Blackburnian Warbler	9/ 5	9/ 3	8/13	--	9/ 7	0	8/28	9/ 8	9/ 5	9/ 5	9/ 2	9/ 3	0	8/17	0	0	0	0	
Chestnut-sided Warbler	9/ 4	8/22	8/13	8/26	--	8/21	8/28	9/ 5	8/19	8/21	8/22	9/30	0	8/20	0	9/13	0	0	
Bay-breasted Warbler	9/16	9/ 1	8/24	--	9/ 7	8/31	9/ 2	9/ 8	8/29	8/23	8/25	0	0	8/28	9/ 9	9/28	9/28	0	
Blackpoll Warbler	9/15	9/15	10/ 1	9/27	--	0	9/ 4	9/18	9/14	9/14	9/ 9	9/22	9/11	9/ 7	9/15	9/14	10/11	--	
Palm Warbler	9/22	10/ 4	0	10/25	0	10/18	0	9/ 8	10/ 3	0	9/28	10/19	0	9/15	0	9/29	10/12	10/ 6	
Ovenbird	8/31	9/ 2	--	8/26	9/ 7	9/ 1	8/23	9/10	8/16	9/ 2	8/31	9/ 7	9/28	8/14	9/11	8/31	2/22	--	
Northern Waterthrush	9/ 1	9/10	--	0	0	0	9/10	0	8/15	9/14	8/23	9/10	0	8/28	9/ 9	9/10	9/28	--	
Connecticut Warbler	9/12	9/24	0	9/27	0	0	10/ 1	0	9/15	9/ 5	9/10	0	10/ 7	9/30	9/30	9/10	9/22	0	
Mourning Warbler	--	--	0	0	0	0	8/29	0	9/ 4	0	9/ 9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Hooded Warbler	--	9/ 9	--	--	--	9/19	9/11	--	9/13	--	9/ 2	9/ 7	8/13	0	0	0	0	--	
Wilson's Warbler	9/ 8	9/ 9	8/24	8/23	0	0	9/11	0	9/ 1	9/ 8	9/14	0	0	0	0	9/10	9/28	0	
Canada Warbler	8/23	8/22	--	8/23	0	8/10	8/16	9/ 5	8/16	8/22	8/25	9/14	0	8/16	0	9/14	0	0	
American Redstart	8/30	9/ 2	--	9/ 7	8/10	8/16	9/ 5	9/ 5	8/17	8/21	8/ 2	9/10	9/20	8/16	9/18	8/30	9/20	9/20	
Bobolink	8/29	8/20	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	8/23	8/23	8/14	9/10	8/18	0	8/16	8/30	--	6/24
Northern Oriole	8/28	8/22	--	--	9/ 7	--	8/31	--	8/17	8/20	8/22	--	--	8/20	--	9/ 6	--	--	
Scarlet Tanager	--	9/ 6	--	--	9/ 7	9/21	9/28	9/10	8/18	8/23	9/ 4	--	8/13	8/29	--	9/13	--	--	
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	9/12	9/13	--	0	--	0	9/ 4	9/20	9/13	9/11	9/ 4	9/10	10/ 1	9/14	9/12	9/13	9/27	0	
Indigo Bunting	--	8/31	--	8/24	9/ 7	--	--	--	--	8/16	--	9/15	8/ 5	--	--	9/28	--		
Purple Finch	--	9/29	--	--	10/11	--	9/18	10/ 4	9/ 7	9/14	10/24	10/ 7	--	10/23	9/15	9/14	9/29	--	
Rufous-sided Towhee	--	9/29	--	10/ 5	9/27	--	10/ 3	--	9/28	10/ 4	9/29	9/21	10/ 8	8/ 6	--	9/23	10/28	--	
Savannah Sparrow	9/30	9/27	--	--	--	--	--	--	10/ 6	9/ 3	--	9/30	0	--	9/10	9/27	--		
Northern Junco	10/ 6	10/ 5	10/ 8	9/28	9/27	10/25	9/17	10/ 5	10/ 5	9/24	10/ 6	10/19	10/ 6	9/29	--	9/28	9/29	10/11	
White-throated Sparrow	9/25	10/ 1	10/ 1	10/ 4	10/ 4	10/ 5	10/ 3	9/30	9/28	9/29	9/30	9/30	10/ 4	9/27	--	9/28	10/13	10/21	
Lincoln's Sparrow	--	--	0	0	0	0	9/10	0	9/28	0	0	0	0	10/ 3	0	10/ 3	0	0	
Swamp Sparrow	10/ 1	10/11	--	--	10/11	--	10/12	10/21	9/29	10/15	10/10	10/19	--	9/24	--	2/29	10/11	--	
Song Sparrow	--	10/ 5	--	10/16	9/27	10/18	9/14	--	10/ 5	10/ 5	--	10/ 5	9/26	10/ 5	--	--	9/28	--	

Loon, Herons, and Ibis. Robert Warfield broke the fall arrival date for the Common Loon by 3 days when he found an immature at West Ocean City on Aug. 23-25. Post-breeding wandering of the southern herons are restricted almost entirely to the Coastal Plain. A Great Egret near Seneca on July 24 (Paul Woodward) was the only Piedmont record of a white heron during the period. The best Cattle Egret count away from the coast was of 100 birds at Greensboro on Aug. 2 (Jerry Fletcher). At least 50 individuals were seen in Talbot County on Sept. 20 (Reese and Armistead). At Mountain Lake on July 20, Fran Pope and Sheila Hughes discovered a Least Bittern feeding 2 downy young--the first breeding record for western Maryland. A half hour after he affixed the name "IBIS" to his boat on July 27, Armistead saw a flock of 24 Glossy Ibis, a new species for his home property at Bellevue.

Ducks. Summer strays in Talbot County included a King Eider at Long Marsh Island in Eastern Bay on July 21, Black Scoter on July 8 and July 30 (2 individuals), and White-winged Scoter from July 8 to Aug. 9 with a maximum of 9 counted (all seen by Reese). A lone Ruddy Duck, apparently a female, was found on Deep Creek Lake on July 4 and again on Aug. 10 (Mrs. Pope). Early fall arrival dates included Green-winged Teal at Hughes Hollow near Seneca on Aug. 23 (Paul Woodward), Blue-winged Teal at the same place on Aug. 29 (Woodward) and a flock of 20 at the Mountain Lake Lagoons on Aug. 30 (Mrs. Pope), and Ruddy Duck in Somerset County on Sept. 13 (Sam Dyke). Three Surf Scoters at Big Pool on Oct. 18 (Robert Keedy) were the first ever seen in Washington County.

Hawks. Early migrating American Kestrels are hard for most MOS members to detect because the species nests regularly in small numbers in almost every Maryland county. Harry Armistead has found early migrants at his Bellevue home in late July in several recent years, and 1975 was no exception; his first bird arrived on July 27, and Jan Reese saw another migrating down the Bay Hundred Peninsula of Talbot County on July 30. Note in Table 1 that observers in Talbot, Kent, and Howard Counties were the only ones to recognize transient kestrels prior to mid-September. We still have much to learn about the beginning of the fall hawk migration, because there has been relatively little coverage of the ridges in Maryland or other states in August. I am inclined to accept a Sharp-shinned Hawk seen at Herrington Manor in Garrett County on Aug. 24 (Mrs. Pope) as an early fall migrant rather than a summering bird; the earliest State record is Aug. 16, 1943 at Patuxent Refuge, where the species has never been found nesting. We have a parallel situation with a Cooper's Hawk that Hal Wierenga saw at Sandy Point State Park on Aug. 19 just after a cold frontal passage; the Cooper's definitely does not nest at Sandy Point, nor is it known to have nested anywhere in that vicinity in recent years. Although Mr. Wierenga was birding the Sandy Point area almost daily, he did not see the Cooper's again. The earliest previous migration date for Maryland was Aug. 24, 1945. Harry Armistead reported that the 6 Sharp-shinned Hawks and 25 kestrels seen at Smith Island on the Sept. 27 Baltimore Chapter trip were, almost without exception, flying due north; this course would take them over South Marsh and Bloodsworth Islands and then to a landfall below Bishops Head or perhaps Hoopers Island. The best migration of Broad-winged Hawks reported was a flight of 250 over the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center on Sept. 27 (Jay Sheppard).

Plovers. Southbound Semipalmated Plovers reached Sandy Point State Park on July 11 (Wierenga) and Ocean City two days later (Warfield). A tally of 12 individuals at Oldtown on Aug. 6 was a fine count for Allegany County (Jim Paulus). A Piping Plover at Sandy Point on Aug. 16 was a real rarity for that bayside location (Wierenga).

Sandpipers, Turnstones, and Phalaropes. The choice area for shorebirding during the summer and autumn was a pair of temporary impoundments at Sandy Point State Park. These impoundments, the result of a channel dredging project, were visited almost daily by Hal Wierenga, who found a total of 27 species of shorebirds there during the southward migration. Mr. Wierenga's detailed observations deserve separate publication under his authorship, so only a few of them will be referred to in the present summary; all of the Anne Arundel County shorebird arrival dates in Table 1 are his; and for all except the Greater Yellowlegs, Sanderling, Semi-palmated Sandpiper, and Dunlin, the Sandy Point arrivals were earlier than those reported this fall from any other part of Maryland. Wierenga broke the State fall arrival records for the Solitary Sandpiper on July 1, the Ruddy Turnstone on July 22, the Stilt Sandpiper on July 11, and the Buff-breasted Sandpiper on Aug. 16 (photographed). Other non-coastal shorebird records of special interest include Stilt Sandpiper at Remington Farms in Kent County on July 28 (reported by Clark Webster), 60 Pectoral Sandpipers at Henderson in Caroline County on July 24 (Marvin Hewitt), and 5 Northern Phalaropes at Oldtown in Allegany County on Sept. 25 (photographed by Paulus).

Terns and Skimmer. Southeast winds and rain at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay on Sept. 1 apparently were responsible for an extraordinary flight of 560 Common Terns that Wierenga counted flying northward past Sandy Point on that day. This is by far the heaviest influx on record for any species of tern into the upper Bay. Twelve Common Terns on Sept. 25 were unusual for Oldtown (Paulus). Wierenga had more than 50 Least Terns around Sandy Point in July, although only 2 young were fledged there; the last 12 were seen on Sept. 12. Royal Terns were found as far up the Bay as Talbot County, July 2 to Sept. 21 (Reese); the best tally for the Bay was 29 birds at Smith Island on the Sept. 27 Baltimore Chapter trip (Armistead). Paulus identified 6 Caspian Terns at Oldtown on Sept. 25, but no others were found inland. Black Terns were widely scattered: 1 over Broadford Reservoir on July 22 (Mrs. Pope), 5 at Sandy Point on Sept. 1 (Wierenga), and 1 at Ocean City on Aug. 13 (Warfield). A Black Skimmer strayed up the Bay as far as Talbot County on July 16 (Reese).

Owls, Goatsuckers. At the one known nesting site of Barn Owls in Garrett County (Mountain Lake Park), 3 young fledged in July--later than last year (Mrs. Pope). Two Chuck-will's-widows were still singing vigorously at Bellevue on July 26 (Armistead).

Kingfishers. When do Belted Kingfishers begin their autumnal migration? Bob Stewart and I avoided any mention of this when we wrote Birds of Maryland and the District of Columbia. We simply had no observations that could be isolated from those of breeding and locally wandering individuals. We know from banding that kingfishers wander considerably.

A bird that I banded at the Patuxent River in back of my house was recovered on the Little Patuxent at Savage, 3 miles away in a straight line but ten times that far if it followed the river. I had assumed that the influx in kingfishers that we notice here in late summer was made up of birds raised within ten or twenty miles of here, but a sighting of a kingfisher flying into Ocean City from over the ocean after a cold front on Aug. 8 by Robert Warfield suggests that migration may actually commence before mid-August.

Woodpeckers. Harry Armistead uncovered a clue as to the origin of the famous flicker flights that approach Hoopers Island from the south during fall migration. Almost all of the 18 Common Flickers seen on the Sept. 29 Baltimore Chapter trip to Smith Island were flying north, presumably seeking a way to cross to the west side of Chesapeake Bay. A few Red-headed Woodpeckers, a rather rare species on the Eastern Shore, evidently had the same problem as did the flickers. One was seen at Ewell on Smith Island on the Sept. 27 trip, and six days earlier Jan Reese had seen a flock of 3 flying high over Tilghman Island at the southwest corner of Talbot County. As usual, any news of Pileated Woodpeckers is good news. A Pileated was among the seven species of woodpeckers that Armistead saw at his home at Bellevue on Sept. 29; two of the three sightings on his property were made this fall.

Flycatchers. The peak of the Eastern Kingbird migration reached Damsite on the Kent County shore of the Chesapeake on Aug. 22 (35 birds, Dorothy Mendenhall and others). Yellow-bellied Flycatchers were caught at most of the banding stations that were in operation in late August and early September. The largest total was 15 birds banded at Adventure, in Montgomery County near Potomac, where Margaret Donnald had a peak of 4 on Sept. 1. Only three Olive-sided Flycatchers were seen: 1 on Aug. 24 in Frederick County (John W. Richards), 1 on Sept. 5 in southern Prince Georges County (Leonard Teuber), and 1 on Sept. 7 in Washington County (Daniel Boone).

Swallows. Although the recent spread of nesting Cliff Swallows into Montgomery, Howard, and Prince Georges Counties has been well documented, most of us were unaware that the more traditional colonies in western Maryland were disappearing. Fran Pope searched in vain for an active colony in Garrett County, and then finally ran a note in the local paper. The one response led her to a thriving colony of 29 nests just south of Oakland in a barn where they have been nesting for at least the last five years. Cliff Swallows are increasing in Washington County, which has at least 4 colonies, one established in 1975 (Dan Boone). A more surprising find was the first nest for the Maryland Coastal Plain, at Upper Marlboro (Bob Patterson). Early fall transients were: Cliff Swallow on Aug. 3, Tree on July 2, Bank on July 1 and Rough-wing on July 2, all at Sandy Point (Wierenga).

Ravens, Nuthatches. John and Ruth Richards saw a Northern Raven near Thurmont in Frederick County on Aug. 24. A nearby Washington County sighting on South Mountain near Smithsburg was of a calling individual in early July (Boone). Red-breasted Nuthatches staged a good flight,

appearing as early as Aug. 19 (banded) at Damsite, Aug. 27 at Emmitsburg (Richards), and Aug. 28 in Anne Arundel County (D. Bystrak). Sixty-two Red-breasts were banded at Damsite in the autumn of 1975 (only 1 the previous year). With the Red-breasts came good numbers of their White-breasted cousins, although arrival dates for the latter were very spotty owing to the difficulty of separating migrants from our local permanent residents.

Thrushes. The brown thrushes, except for the Gray-cheeked, seem to have recovered from their sharp decline in 1974. Most banders recorded substantial increases, especially in Swainson's and Wood Thrushes. Gray-cheeks are still below normal and they also were late in arriving. A Swainson's was banded in Salisbury (Vaughn) on the extraordinary date of July 23, three days ahead of the previous freak date of July 26, 1972. The seasonal total of Swainson's jumped from 77 in 1974 to 216 in 1975 at Damsite and from 177 in 1974 to 269 in 1975 at Adventure. The Wood Thrush total rose from 39 in 1974 to 89 in 1975 at Damsite and from 29 in 1974 to 65 in 1975 at Adventure.

Waxwings. Cedar Waxwings reached a strong peak of 500 birds along the Chester River in Kent County on Sept. 8 (Jim Gruber).

Warblers. In view of the late spring, it was a great surprise to find so many of the warblers arriving substantially ahead of schedule in August. Note in Table 1 how many of the 1975 median dates are several days earlier than the ten-year median. Abnormally cool temperatures in New York, New England and eastern Canada triggered a strong movement of warblers into the Middle Atlantic States during the period Aug. 19-23, even though our temperatures here were above average at that time. A Tennessee Warbler was banded at Damsite on Aug. 21 (Mrs. Mendenhall), another at Adventure on Aug. 25 (Mrs. Donnald), and 20(!) were seen at Herrington Manor in Garrett County (Mrs. Pope) on Aug. 24. To put this count in proper perspective, note that Birds of Maryland and D.C. (1958) cites only one State record earlier than Aug. 25. The first Nashville Warblers were single birds seen at Herrington Manor and (banded) at Damsite on Aug. 24; these are the earliest Maryland arrival records except for one in Garrett County on Aug. 19, 1972. A Cape May Warbler banded at Damsite on Aug. 22 (Mrs. Mendenhall) broke the State arrival by one day, and Black-throated Blues seen in Baltimore City and in Baltimore County on Aug. 21 (Peggy Bohanan, Barbara Larrabee) were within one day of the Piedmont record. Another State record was broken by John and Ruth Richards, who independently identified a Yellow-rumped Warbler at their Emmitsburg home on Aug. 24. A week before the Aug. 19-23 flights, Fran Pope had found what appeared to be a migratory flock of Black-throated Green, Blackburnian and Chestnut-sided Warblers along the Snaggy Mountain Road west of Herrington Manor in western Garrett County on Aug. 13. Elsewhere the first Black-throated Green was seen at Laurel on Aug. 21 (Chris Ludwig), the first Blackburnian was banded at Damsite on Aug. 17, and the first Chestnut-side at Adventure on Aug. 19. There was general agreement that the Tennessee, Cape May and Bay-breasted Warblers were in much better numbers than usual; these three species are typical breeders in the spruce budworm country of eastern Canada. The Tennessee

was the commonest bird banded in September at Pleasant Valley near Bittinger (65 birds, Ken Hodgdon), and the Cape May was in 5th place there (29 banded). Fifty Tennessee were banded at Adventure in Montgomery County (Mrs. Donnald), 40 at Round Bay in Anne Arundel County (Danny Bystrak), and 81 at Damsite (Mrs. Mendinhal), as compared with 6, 0, and 41 at these same stations in 1974. Cape May totals for these same three stations were 0, 19, and 60 (4, 0, and 39 in 1974); and Bay-breast totals were 62, 19, and 74 (7, 11, and 23 in 1974). The Bay-breast was added to the Irish Grove Sanctuary list on Sept. 28 (Mrs. Cole and Herbert Axell). Also well above average were the Black-throated Blue Warbler, 28, 17, and 127 (25, 5, and 119 in 1974), Ovenbird, 111, 79, and 159 (75, 15, and 115 in 1974), and Canada Warbler, 103, 19, and 39 (29, 6, and 15 in 1974).

Finches. Early arrivals of Purple Finches and Pine Siskins heralded a good winter in Maryland for these erratic wanderers. Mrs. Donnald banded an early Purple Finch at Adventure on Sept. 7, and Harry Armistead found an early Pine Siskin at Bellevue on Sept. 29.

7900 Brooklyn Bridge Road, Laurel 20810



FIRST CATTLE EGRETS AND WHITE-WINGED SCOTERS IN ALLEGANY COUNTY

James Paulus

At 9 a.m. on April 3, 1975, I observed a Cattle Egret (*Bubulcus ibis*) two miles west of Oldtown on Maryland Route 51. The bird was in a pasture close to the highway, standing on the ground next to a steer. I had a good close study and all field marks were seen. The egret was in breeding plumage, and the buff on the breast, shoulders and top of head were plainly visible. The owner of the farm told me he had seen four of these egrets on the previous day. This is the first Maryland sighting west of the Hagerstown Valley.

Early on the morning of April 15, 1975, Park Ranger Mike Mastrangelo and I located a small flock of ducks on the Potomac River at the mouth of the Little Cacapon River just above Paw Paw, W. Va. Examination with binoculars, from a distance of 50 yards, showed them to be White-winged Scoters (*Melanitta deglandi*): 4 males and 2 females. The white wing patch and white eye patch were plainly seen on the males. The plumage of the males was blackish and the bill pale orange; the black bill knob was not seen. The females were dark brown; their white wing patch could be seen only when they stretched their wings. The head patches of the females were light brown rather than white. At the time of this observation a coastal storm was centered on Cape Hatteras, bringing east winds and heavy rain to coastal Maryland, and light rain to the Maryland mountains. This is the first record of White-winged Scoter for Allegany County, and the 218th species I have identified within the county boundaries. On May 2, 1975, I was surprised to find two more White-winged Scoters in Allegany County; these were on Rouge Lagoon near Oldtown.

P.O. Box 35, Oldtown 21555



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AN OPEN LETTER TO COL. LELAND S. DEVORE.

Dear Col. Devore,

I have read with interest your "Potpourri for Non-sophisticated Birders" that appeared in the March 1975 issue of *Maryland Birdlife* (31: 44-46). Without question the modern tape recorder/player is a useful tool for the birder and student of birds. I have such a device, and I use it in the field. One of the many interesting studies that can be performed is determining the limits of a breeding bird's territory, and the prudent use of a recorded bird song is very helpful in such a study.

However, the improper and indiscriminate use of a tape recorder potentially can do damage. For example, I have little doubt that the frequent use of pre-recorded calls has been a major factor contributing to the virtual disappearance of the Swainson's Warbler from the immediate vicinity of the roads through the northern section of the Pocomoke Swamp. I must also take strong exception to your suggestion that birders play a Screech Owl call to attract birds. My reasons are as follows: (1) Birds should be seen, studied, and enjoyed in their natural environment insofar as possible. It is not natural to hear a Screech Owl calling in daylight, and it is not fair to the objects of our delight to upset them, for even a brief period of time, by playing a recorded call of a predator for a selfish reason. (2) I have witnessed severe abuse of the very technique you recommend--unthinking birders playing an owl call so loudly that it could be heard a half mile away, disturbing birds and birders as well. Birds are sensitive to even faint sounds.

A birder does not need a "gimmick" to find and see birds. Study the records and tapes at home, and then leave your recorder at home with your dog. In the field, move about slowly and quietly, making the least possible disturbance. Better still, sit quietly in the shade of a tree. You will be amazed at what you will see and learn when the birds are acting naturally.--Carroll E. Pinckard, Jr., 6601 Walther Ave., Baltimore 21206.

COMING EVENTS

- Apr. 9 BALTIMORE Spring Social. Mary McFarland Leister. Cylburn, 8 pm
 9-11 EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSN Annual Meeting, Chevy Chase Nat'l 4-H Center. Contact Dr. William Oberman, 212-333-6315
- 10 ANNE ARUNDEL Trip to Mill Creek Sanctuary. Parole Plaza, 7:30 am
 10 FREDERICK Trip to Utica. Meet Culler Lake boathouse, 7:30 am
 11 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee Park footbridge, 4pm
 11 OCEAN CITY PELAGIC TRIP. Contact R. Rowlett, 715 Main St., Laurel
 11 TALBOT Breakfast hike. Meet Easton library, 7 a.m.
 13 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee Park footbridge, 8 am
 14 TALBOT Meeting. Pelagic exploration for seabirds, Rowlett. Maryland Room, Loyola S & L Assn., Easton, 8 p.m.
 15 BALTIMORE Bird and wildflower walk, Cylburn, 9 a.m. Mrs. Bowen
 15 CAROLINE Meeting. Film, Wild Chorus, Denton library, 7:30 pm
 17 ANNE ARUNDEL Trip to C&O Canal. John & Helen Ford. Parole, 7:30
 17 BALTIMORE Loch Raven trip. Meet Towson Pl. self-serv PO, 8 am
 18 TALBOT Breakfast hike. Meet Easton library, 7 a.m.
 20 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee Park footbridge, 8 am
 21 ALLEGANY Monthly meeting, Board of Education Bldg., 7:30 pm
 22 BALTIMORE Cylburn walk for warblers and nesting birds, 9 a.m.
 23 DORCHESTER Monthly meeting, Public Library, 7:30 p.m.
 24 PATUXENT Annual wildflower walk. 9th & Montg'y, Laurel, 8 a.m.
 24 BALTIMORE Trip to Perry Point & Rock Run. MacDonalds 40E & 24, 8
 24 ANNE ARUNDEL Trip to Gibson Island. Register by Apr. 12 (544-0565)
 24 ALLEGANY C & O Canal walk. Meet Spring Gap camping area, 8 am
 24 HARFORD Trip to Elk Neck, Cecil County
 24 KENT Trip to Millington Wildlife Management Area
 25 TALBOT Breakfast hike to Mill Creek Sanctuary. Library, 7 am
 25 OCEAN CITY PELAGIC TRIP. Contact R. Rowlett, 715 Main St., Laurel
 25 FREDERICK Trip to Lilypons. Meet Culler Lake boathouse, 2 p.m.
 25 BALTIMORE Come-as-you-are Tea. County library, Towson, 3-5 p.m.
 26 WICOMICO Monthly meeting. Warbler ident. Asbury Church, 8 p.m.
 27 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee Park footbridge, 8 am
 27 PATUXENT Monthly meeting, St. Philips Parish Hall, Laurel 7:45
 27 WASHINGTON Monthly meeting, Emma K. Doub School, 7:30 p.m.
 29 BALTIMORE Rock Run trip for warblers and trilliums. Towson Pl, 8
 30 BALTIMORE Audubon film, Steve Maslowski. Dumbarton Jr High, 8 pm
- May 1 STATEWIDE BIRD COUNT. Contact your local Chapter, or C. S. Robbins. We hope every member will plan to participate.
- 2 TALBOT Breakfast hike. Meet Easton library, 7 a.m.
 4 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee footbridge, 8 a.m.
 5 BALTIMORE Loch Raven trip. Towson Plaza self-serv. PO, 8 a.m.
 6 HARFORD Trip to Susquehanna State Park
 6 BALTIMORE Trip to Bosley Road. Towson Pl. self-serv. PO, 8 a.m.
 6 FREDERICK Members night. Hodson Science Bldg, Hood College, 7:30
- 7-9 ANNUAL CONVENTION, FENWICK INN, NORTH OCEAN CITY, featuring Ellis Porter Friday evening, field trips Saturday & Sunday. For Sunday sea trip send \$20 to Richard Rowlett, 715 Main St., Laurel, Md. 20810 (reservations for this trip will be taken in order of receipt of boat fare).

May 8 BALTIMORE Trip to Finally Farm, Phoenix. Old Phoenix RR Sta, 8
 9 BALTIMORE Trip to Horsehead Woods. Meet McDonogh RR bridge, 8
 11 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee Park footbridge, 8
 12 BALTIMORE Loch Raven trip. Meet Towson Plaza post office, 8 am
 13 BALTIMORE Woodstock trip. Meet Towson Plaza post office, 8 am
 15 ALLEGANY C & O Canal walk. Meet Spring Gap camping area, 8 am
 15 ANNE ARUNDEL Crownsville warbler trip. Parole Plaza, Riva Rd, 7:30
 15-16 BALTIMORE Bird survey, Claggett Diocesan Center. See Newsletter
 16 BALTIMORE President's Walk, Patapsco St.Pk., Montg'y Ward, 8 am
 18 BALTIMORE Lake Roland walk. Robert E. Lee Park footbridge, 8
 20 BALTIMORE Monkton trip. Meet Towson Plaza self-serv PO, 8 a.m.
 22 BALTIMORE Bus trip, Nat'l Arboretum & Kenilworth. See Newsletter
 22 KENT Trip to Little Creek, Delaware for shorebirds
 22 ANNE ARUNDEL Annual Picnic, Sandy Point State Park, 4:30 p.m.
 22 HARFORD Trip to Pennyfield Lock, C & O Canal, Seneca
 22-23 TALBOT Trip to Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge, N.J.
 22 BALTIMORE "Night Sounds" (trip and meeting), Cylburn, 7-10 pm
 23 BALTIMORE Come-as-you-are Tea. Towson library, 3-5 p.m.
 23 FREDERICK Trip to Tresselt's Pond. Culler Lake boathouse, 2 pm
 24 WICOMICO Meeting. Film, "Beaver Pond." Asbury Ch., 8 pm



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